

**AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS**

The attached sheet(s) of drawings includes changes to Figs. 1 and 2.

Attachment:      Replacement sheet

### **REMARKS**

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

The Office Action and prior art relied upon have been carefully considered. On the summary sheet of the Office Action the Examiner indicated a restriction requirement. However, this is believed to be an error since all the claims were acted upon and the Office Action per se does not indicate details of a restriction requirement.

In an effort to expedite the prosecution the claims have been rewritten to clarify the patentable aspects of the present invention.

Also, headings for the specification have been provided along with a brief description of the figures. Figs 1 and 2 have been labeled Prior Art to conform to the specification.

Claims 1-4 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Couffet (US 5,397,677). The present applicant has the same assignee as Couffet and in fact the presently claimed invention is an improvement over the assignee's prior patent to Couffet.

Claim 1 has been amended in order to recite that the coils of the inductor surround the metal strip. This feature is shown by Fig. 3. and corresponds, in the specification, to page 2, lines 35-38.

Couffet et al (US 5 397 877) relates to a device for the induction heating of flat metallic products with the aid of electrical coils 14, 14' arranged on either side of the

large faces of the product to be heated. The inductors are mechanically independent of each other and they are arranged symmetrically in relation to the median plane of the product (see col.2 lines 11-13).

Contrary to the heating inductors of the invention, according to Couffet et al. the inductors do not surround the flat product to be heated. The problem of overheating of the edges of the strip compared to its central part is neither considered nor solved by Couffet et al.

Couffet et al. does not show an inductor which surrounds the strip and which includes, inside its coils, two magnetic field deflectors, masking the inductor coils at the edges of the strip.

Claim 1 has been amended to specifically claim these limitations and clearly, Couffet et al. does not suggest the solution of structure of the amended claims.

In view of the above, consideration and allowance are, therefore, respectfully solicited.

In the event the Examiner believes an interview might serve to advance the prosecution of this application in any way, the undersigned attorney is available at the telephone number noted below.

The Director is hereby authorized to charge any fees, or credit any overpayment, associated with this communication, including any extension fees, to CBLH Deposit Account No. 22-0185, under Order No. 21029-00280-US from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: July 26, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

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## Attachments